

**introducing the  
Puerto Rican  
Solidarity  
Committee**



## WHY SHOULD WE SUPPORT PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE?

Puerto Rico is a classical colony of the United States. This has been true since the invasion of Puerto Rico by the United States in 1898, which violated the autonomous political status owed to Puerto Rico by Spain a year earlier.

Although we are told Puerto Rico has its own government and constitution today, in fact the U.S. Congress has jurisdiction over eight-fifths of all areas of political and economic life. These include migration and immigration, citizenship, currency, trade with other countries, labor relations, communications, postal service, maintenance of an army and military use of land (13% of Puerto Rico's best agricultural land is occupied by U.S. military bases, including nuclear installations). U.S. corporations own 88% of the industry in Puerto Rico.

In the words of the Commonwealth Government of Puerto Rico: "Much of Puerto Rico's success stems from the fact that it is proudly American. It's a self-governing Commonwealth of the United States, protected by the Constitutions of both Puerto Rico and the U.S. Its citizens are U.S., its currency is U.S., its armed forces and judicial and postal systems are U.S." These statements come from the Economic Development Administration's appeal for more U.S. investment, in a booklet called: *PUERTO RICO Profit Island, U.S.A.*

But what in fact does U.S. economic domination mean for Puerto Ricans?

U.S. control of Puerto Rico has created a life and death crisis for the Puerto Rican nation.

—U.S. domination stifles any independent economic development on the island. Average Puerto Rican wages are one-half the average U.S. wage; the cost of living is even higher than in New York (the inflation rate in Puerto Rico is 6 times higher than in the U.S.).

—Unemployment, which is chronic, has reached over 35% today. Puerto Ricans, forced to look for work, have migrated to the United States. Those who are in this country face brutal racist oppression, live in the worst slums or migrant camps, and find only the lowest paying jobs available.

—A 1974 report put together by the Commonwealth Government, reveals plans which would lead to the destruction of the Puerto Rican nation, U.S. government and corporate interests, with the full cooperation of the colonial government, plan to convert the island into a mineral processing center, petroleum factory, petro-chemical complex and tourism site. This will be accompanied by the forced migration of another one million Puerto Ricans to the

U.S., and the forcible sterilization of many of the Puerto Rican women remaining on the island.

But these realities do not go unchallenged. Since the time of the Spanish invasion, Puerto Ricans have courageously struggled against colonial domination. Today, the Puerto Rican independence movement is growing dramatically. In workers' strikes, student demonstrations, community struggles, everywhere Puerto Ricans fight for their rights, independence is increasingly being seen as the key to the resolution to the severe economic, political and social problems that affect Puerto Rico.

## INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE

The Puerto Rican people's right to independence has been recognized internationally. On December 14, 1973 the General Assembly of the U.N. overwhelmingly approved a resolution citing the Puerto Rican people's right to self-determination and independence.

A few months earlier, in September, 1973, at the Conference of Non-Aligned Nations held in Algiers, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party was granted observer status as the representative of the Puerto Rican national liberation struggle. In the Fall, 1975 Cuba will host the first "International Conference in Solidarity with Puerto Rican Independence," which will be attended by delegations representing governments, national liberation movements and other anti-imperialist forces from all over the world.

## OUR STRUGGLES ARE LINKED

The same corporations which are profiting from the oppression of the Puerto Rican people are exploiting us. The same oil companies who manufactured a phony oil crisis want to convert Puerto Rico into a petroleum factory; the same copper companies who robbed Chile of its natural resources exploit Chilean and white workers in the southwest of this country, and have plans to devour the copper deposits in central Puerto Rico. The same agribusiness interests which force Mexicans and Puerto Ricans and others to migrate to this country (because they cannot find work in their homeland where they face abysmal wages and working conditions, have monopolized the world food market and force our food prices up.

It is this same government and the same corporations that orchestrated "Watergate", and tell us that we must put up with unemployment, inflation, higher taxes, cutbacks in health care, education and other social services in order to solve the U.S. economic crisis.

By taking up the call for independence for Puerto Rico, we are actively joining forces with the Puerto Rican people here and on the island in our common struggle against U.S. imperialism.

On October 27, 1974, 20,000 people from all over the United States rallied at Madison Square Garden to demand independence for Puerto Rico.

This militant rally of people from different backgrounds, races and nationalities demonstrated that the anti-imperialist movement in this country has reached a new level of awareness. People at the rally acknowledged that Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States; that the U.S. government directly and forcibly controls the nation of Puerto Rico.

We recognized that the Puerto Rican people are fighting for their national liberation and that we in the United States have a major role to play in the outcome of their struggle. And we affirmed the fact that the fight for Puerto Rican independence is fundamentally linked up with our own struggle for fundamental change in the U.S.

In March, 1975, an important step was taken by the same forces which came together in Madison Square Garden. A national, anti-imperialist organization was founded, the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee (PRSC) with the goal of building support within the United States for the full independence of Puerto Rico and the self-determination of the Puerto Rican people.

Currently, the PRSC is carrying out five national campaigns, which we consider of strategic importance in building concrete support for the Puerto Rican people's movement for independence:

1) Participation in the "International Conference in Solidarity with Independence for Puerto Rico" which will be held in September 5-7, 1975 in Havana, Cuba.

2) Developing support for the struggles of Puerto Rican workers. With the exportation of the U.S. economic crisis to Puerto Rico the importance of the Puerto Rican workers' movement in the struggle for Puerto Rican independence has become even greater.

3) Building a movement to oppose the intervention of U.S. Federal agencies—such as the FBI, CIA, National Guard—to repress the Puerto Rican people and the independence movement.

4) Building support for the unconditional freedom of the five Puerto Rican Nationalist Political Prisoners, longest-held political prisoners in the Western hemisphere, and for recently jailed Carlos Palicrino, a Puerto Rican Nationalist who has been the target of fierce political repression in the United States for several years.

5) Developing a campaign against the genocidal population policies of the U.S. government (principally forced migration and sterilization) used against

the Puerto Rican people, both on the island and in the U.S. in the name of economic progress. At this time, 35% of women of child-bearing age in Puerto Rico are sterilized.

The PRSC is organized in local chapters throughout the U.S. Anyone who supports the organization's objectives and agrees to participate in its programs, may join the PRSC.

## Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to join the PRSC. Please send me the committee's political statement and an application form.

## Puerto Rico Libral

\_\_\_\_\_ I want to subscribe to *Puerto Rico Libral*, the 10-page, monthly bulletin of the PRSC.

\_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is \$5.00 for an individual subscription.

\_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is \$15.00 for an institutional subscription.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please send me a sample copy of *Puerto Rico Libral*.

## Other Resources

\_\_\_\_\_ I want to arrange a slide-showing on Puerto Rico.

\_\_\_\_\_ I want to show the video-tape of the October 27, 1974 rally.

\_\_\_\_\_ I want a speaker from the PRSC to come to my area. (spec. date and time)

\_\_\_\_\_ I want a representative of the Puerto Rican independence movement to come and speak in my area (specify date and time)

## Local Committee:

## Detach and mail to:

Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee  
P.O. Box 319, Cooper Station,  
New York, N.Y. 10003

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

## **NATIONAL BOARD**

### **At-Large Members:**

(Organizations listed for identification purposes only);

Ella J. Baker, civil rights activist;

Amiri Baraka, Congress of Afrikan People;

Frances Beal, Third World Women's Alliance;

Clyde Bellecourt, American Indian Movement;

Rev. Ben Chavis, National Alliance Against Racism and Political Repression;

Walter Collins, Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF);

Dave Dellinger, anti-war activist;

Rev. David Garcia, St. Mark's in the Bowery

Episcopal Church, NYC;

Corky Gonzalez, Crusade for Justice;

Jim Houghton, Fightback!

Phil Hutchings, former chairman of Student

Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC);

Arthur Kinoy, Interim Committee for a Mass Party of the People;

Yuri Kochiyama, Asian Americans for Action;

Beverly Leman, New York Women's Union;

Bob Lewis, attorney;

Antonio Rodriguez, Centro de Accion Social Autonomo (CASA);

Owusu Sadaukai, African Liberation Support Committee;

Irwin Silber, *Guardian*;

Annie Stein, People Against Racism in

Education (PARE);

Jose "Che" Velazquez, Puerto Rican Socialist Party

### **Committee Coordinators:**

Ted Glick, Washington, D.C.;

Tami Gold, New Jersey;

Cathy Graham, Hartford;

Fanny Hicks, Chicago;

Carolyn Lobban, Rhode Island;

Belen Molinari, Buffalo;

Julie Nichamin, New York City;

Ivelise Padin, Los Angeles;

Tony Rostain, New Haven;

Anne Sills, Boston

### **Executive Secretary:**

Alfredo Lopez